

**REGULAR MEETING OF
BELMONT REDEVELOPMENT AGENCY
Tuesday, July 10, 2007
CITY COUNCIL CHAMBERS, ONE TWIN PINES LANE**

CALL TO ORDER 7:55 P.M.

ROLL CALL

Directors Present: Dickenson, Lieberman, Mathewson, Warden, Feierbach

Directors Absent: None

Staff Present: Executive Director Crist, Agency Attorney Zafferano, Community Development Director de Melo, Finance Director Fil, Public Works Director Davis, Police Chief Mattei, Human Resources Director Sam, Agency Secretary Cook

AGENDA AMENDMENTS

Director Lieberman requested the removal of Consent Item 4-B (Resolution Approving Plans and Specifications, Authorizing for Sealed Bids, Approving Award of Contract to the Lowest Responsible Bidder for an Amount Not to Exceed \$85,000, Approving a Construction Contingency Not to Exceed \$8,500, and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Contract for the Twin Pines Park Fence Replacement Project, City Contract Number 487) for separate consideration.

Director Warden requested the removal of Consent Item 4-C (Resolution Authorizing Approval of a New Professional Services Agreement with Aimee Swanson Consulting for Design, Implementation and Administration of the Facade Improvement Program for an Amount Not to Exceed \$16,000 for Phases I and II, and 3% Commission Not to Exceed \$4,500 for Phase III) for separate consideration.

ITEM APPROVED ON CONSENT CALENDAR

Approval of Minutes of Special Meeting of May 29, 2007 and Regular Meeting of June 12, 2007

ACTION: On a motion by Director Dickenson, seconded by Director Warden, the Consent Agenda was unanimously approved, as amended, by a show of hands.

ITEMS REMOVED FROM CONSENT CALENDAR FOR SEPARATE CONSIDERATION

Resolution Approving Plans and Specifications, Authorizing for Sealed Bids, Approving Award of Contract to the Lowest Responsible Bidder for an Amount Not to Exceed \$85,000, Approving a Construction Contingency Not to Exceed \$8,500, and Authorizing the City Manager to Execute a Contract for the Twin Pines Park Fence Replacement Project, City Contract Number 487

Director Lieberman stated that he has questions of the Parks and Recreation Director, who is not present at tonight's meeting, and requested that this matter be held over to a subsequent meeting.

Chair Feierbach noted that there is not enough information in the staff report for her to make a decision regarding this matter. She requested information regarding the cost to repair rather than replace the fence, evidence of the need to replace the fence, bids to repair, and more examples of fence types. She expressed concerns regarding the use of Redevelopment money for this project.

Director Dickenson responded that he serves as a member of the Fence Committee and would be available to answer questions.

Senior Parks Maintenance Worker Ourtiage responded that the existing fence has been repaired many times in fifty years, and is deteriorating. It has been struck by cars and is rotting in some places. He noted that Alternate A extends the fence farther west than currently exists. The fence was evaluated by an expert in 2005, who noted that grape stakes are difficult to locate, and no new stakes are available to purchase. He clarified that one tree would be removed if the existing fence were replaced, but the tree is hazardous and needs to be removed, regardless. Two additional trees would be removed should the fence be extended. The cost for replacement of the existing fence length would be \$56,000, and retaining wall and sidewalk repairs would be performed by the Public Works Department.

Discussion ensued.

Director Lieberman stated that a new fence is warranted, and he recommended creating some open areas for people to be able to see into the park. The entryway to the park at South Road is narrow and should be widened for safety and aesthetic reasons.

Chair Feierbach stated that the posting of signs on the fence needs to be addressed. Illegally posted signs should be removed. Senior Parks Maintenance Worker Ourtiage responded that this issue was beyond the scope of the committee's charge.

Margo Cheechov, Parks and Recreation Commissioner/Tree Committee Member, clarified that the height of the fence was reduced to four feet to provide for park views from the street, but a fence is needed to provide a buffer from the traffic.

Director Warden expressed his appreciation for the work done by the committee. He is not comfortable using Redevelopment monies to replace a fence, since those monies are intended to reduce blight. The cost estimates appear high. He did not vote to allocate funds for a new fence. He would like more options.

Director Mathewson noted that the Council supported a redwood fence, and it asked for options that were not reviewed. Cost options should be provided. He can make a finding for the use of RDA monies for some of the costs, since there is some blight present with the current fence. The committee did the work it was asked to do, but he would like to see more of the deliberations that took place at the committee level.

Director Dickenson also commended the committee's and staff's work on this issue. He concurs that more detail of the committee's work should be provided. The fence is failing. The existing

grape stakes could be recycled to offset costs. He would like to address the issue of the posting of signs.

Chair Feierbach commented that she could support the use of some RDA funds for this project, but that most of the cost should be borne by the General Fund. She does not support the installation of pergolas, and does not support the fence extension. She wants to be prudent with spending, because labor negotiations are under way.

Senior Parks Maintenance Worker Ourtiage clarified that costs were reduced as a result of the recommendation for the use of lower-cost materials. He noted that the committee considered several alternate materials.

Director Lieberman supports the recommendation of the committee. This project should not be done cheaply. TwinPines Park is a major asset, and the fence is seen by hundreds of people on a daily basis. He supports the installation of pergolas. He would support the use of RDA monies, as this type of improvement is connected to economic development. Better aesthetics are needed.

Director Warden clarified that his biggest issue is cost.

Judy King, Parks and Recreation Commissioner/Tree Committee Member, stated that she concurred with Director Lieberman's comments regarding the economic development connection. She clarified that the addition of pergolas at the various pedestrian entrances was made by the Planning Commission as a way of creating more of an inviting entrance. She noted that the committee was charged with recommending one design, not providing several options.

Directors concurred to have this item come back at a subsequent date to be determined.

Resolution Authorizing Approval of a New Professional Services Agreement with Aimee Swanson Consulting for Design, Implementation and Administration of the Facade Improvement Program for an Amount Not to Exceed \$16,000 for Phases I and II, and 3% Commission Not to Exceed \$4,500 for Phase III

Director Warden asked if the vendor possessed the appropriate skills for this task. He thought the hourly rate seemed high. He would support a lower start-up fee but a higher commission rate. Phase I could be performed by the Chamber of Commerce or City staff, not an outside vendor. It is results-driven. His recollection was that the Chamber was going to take on this project.

Director Dickenson noted that there has been discussion with the Chamber of Commerce about the need to improve the program. He does not support paying someone to give away free money.

Finance Director Fil responded that there is a need to improve the program, as only two grants have been made in several years. The program is defective, the grant amounts are too low and there is too much paperwork for the applicant. Considerable staff time has been devoted to processing the grants, and a consultant is needed to offset staff time. He noted that the Chamber of Commerce had already used the proposed vendor in the field, who has specialized skills necessary for this task. The proposed rate is commensurate with the industry.

Community Development Director de Melo noted that the program is not being used, although monies are allocated every year. He concurred that the vendor rate is within range of other consultants in the same field.

Director Lieberman concurred that the program needs to be improved, and a professional is needed in order to accomplish this. He supports the staff recommendation.

In response to Director Mathewson, Community Development Director de Melo clarified that the Redevelopment Agency approves the grant, and the Planning commission approves the design. The program could change, but the Agency should have the final say.

Director Warden stated that the City should define, implement and market the program, and a consultant could be used to process the applications. He stated he could support a not-to-exceed \$5,000 amount applicable to Phase I on an hourly basis as needed.

ACTION: Director Warden made a motion, seconded by Director Lieberman, to implement a Façade Improvement Program marketing plan, implementation plan, and application assistance plan.

ACTION: Director Mathewson offered a friendly amendment that the Plan be reviewed by the Economic Development Subcommittee. Said amendment was accepted by Directors Warden and Lieberman.

ACTION: On the original motion, as amended, was unanimously approved by a show of hands.

ADJOURNMENT at this time, being 9:05 P.M.

Terri Cook
Agency Secretary

Meeting audio-recorded and videotaped
Audio Recording 670